

## Cochise

BRETT BODEMER

On the way to Tombstone  
I stop at Cochise.  
Not the town, but  
The cemetery, a rectangle

Carved from scrub, perpendicular  
To the asphalt rectangle  
Of highway—joined  
By an isthmus of old planks.

The dirt lane and parking lot are one.  
A padlock hangs from the chain-link fence,  
Itself a break in the corral  
Of barbed-wire three lines high.

I hoist myself over the gateposts  
Which move under the wind's weight  
More than under my own. The baffle  
At my ears is incessant.

At my shoes: stony, thorny, earth. No  
Mausoleums here. The highest headstone  
Scales to my knees, one of but three  
In marble. Many markers are blocks

Of cement, dateless names gouged in.  
Others are small tin plates nailed  
To spindly metal posts hammered into  
The stiff ground, names gone. Cochise

Cemetery. Its largest structure:  
On a wooden platform, water drum  
crowned by spinning  
wind-vanes.

There's no one here but me, in this  
Space longer than it is wide, corners  
At ninety degrees, sustained  
By the Cochise Volunteers.

A tumbleweed bounds over my head,  
Leaps the barbed wire, vanishes.  
An oncoming alley of dust  
Drives me back to my car.